

THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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Japan Won't Fight

JAMES SANNER

Rhetoric II, Theme 16, 1941-1942

DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR OF 1940-41, I WAS A SENIOR in high school, and like all other high-school seniors in Illinois, I was required to take a course in American history. From the start of the course, I, like the rest of the students, was determined to be bored. And worse still: our instructor carefully explained that we were to keep a notebook of clippings from the daily newspaper concerning one phase of current events of world-wide interest and importance. Amid the groans that greeted that bit of news our instructor continued: each student was also at the end of each semester to prepare a paper based on his clippings, stating the general trend of events and giving his conclusions. Perhaps because there were relatively few newspaper reports at that time about the political situation in the Far East, I chose that as my subject.

Although my book did not grow to the alarming proportions that those did which were devoted to national defense, I gradually accumulated a daily record of events as reported in the *Decatur Review*, the only newspaper to which I had access. Most of these articles were by routine writers of the Associated Press, but I found several written by the "experts." Among these men who were supposedly well-versed in foreign affairs were Walter Lippmann, Glenn Babb, Drew Middleton, Dewitt Mackenzie, Col. Frederick Palmer, and John Evans, Associated Press Chief of Foreign Service. Editorials expressing the opinions and conclusions of the persons publishing the *Decatur Review* were also among my data. I had been rather reluctant to start the enormous task of collecting the newspaper articles, but once armed with all this information, I was even more apprehensive of the job of "boiling it down" into a term paper ten to fifteen pages long. In view of the present situation in the Far East, though, my term reports are very interesting.

In my first paper, dated January 17, 1941, I concluded that Japan was a "fast talker," that she "can face words, but she won't face big guns." As evidence to support my point, I presented the fact that she had at first resorted to face-saving compromise when events came to a crisis in French Indo-China. The French warned of resistance to any forcible invasion, and so the Nipponese quietly forgot their threat to take Indo-China by invasion. Of course, after the almost complete collapse of France, the Japanese did take Indo-China, but that only served to prove further my theory that they wouldn't face big guns. During the first part of 1941 it was also reported that the attitude of Japanese statesmen was becoming more conciliatory

toward the United States. When we made a one-hundred million dollar loan to China, thus making it very clear even to the Japanese which side Uncle Sam favored in the Chinese-Nipponese quarrel, forthcoming reports from Japan were "distinctly placatory in tone," instead of being, as usual, clamorous and bellicose.

At the end of the second semester, in May, 1941, I prepared the second term paper, expressing the opinion that Japan was on the German bandwagon because Hitler momentarily held the upper hand. I concluded that the United States had little to fear from Japan in the way of war in the Far East unless we first became engaged in a struggle against Germany. Even our administration at Washington, it was reported, felt that there was no immediate danger of an American-Japanese war. The tense Far-Eastern situation, officials announced, was something made in Germany, and there was reason to think that Berlin had been exerting pressure to get Japan into the present war and then embroiled with the United States in the Far East to hamper the British Aid program. Although the Japanese kept up a constant clamor about what she intended to take, and continued to shout loud and long about our unfriendly gestures in the Pacific, expert news analysts reported that the Japanese were merely trying to divert our attention from the European war. Besides that, they said, the United States holds a great trade weapon over Japan. She is very dependent upon us for markets and war materials, and she would be taking a great risk of national economic collapse if she were to start a war with the United States.

At the time I prepared these papers, I put implicit faith in my notebook of news reports; in fact, I had not the slightest thought of doubting them. I see now both why I trusted the accuracy of the reports as I did, and why I should have questioned the truth of some of them. This is a land of freedom of the press, of freedom to print the truth; but it is also a land of freedom to print half truths and untruths and to print rumors as facts. These ideas that I expressed in my term papers are interesting; how wonderful it would be if they were also true! That the newspaper reports and opinions of the experts are not always correct can be seen from the fact that my theories based on these reports have just been proved to be entirely wrong. This error could hardly have been demonstrated more spectacularly or conclusively than it was at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, when Japan's "war of nerves" against the United States became an actual "war of nerve." Although more than a year before, some assiduous reporter had quoted Secretary of Navy Frank Knox as saying that "if a fight is forced upon us we shall be ready for them," the Nipponese attack on Pearl Harbor caught us, as *Time* expresses it, "with our pants down." The Philippine Islands, although mentioned but occasionally in newspapers as an aim of the Japanese, were one of their first points of attack, and the

huge trade weapon we supposedly held over Japan seems to have mysteriously "gone to Nanny."

The Nipponese have also made good their bluffs and threats against Great Britain. Early in 1941, according to newspaper accounts, the British greatly strengthened their Hongkong defenses. Big guns were placed on hilltops overlooking the harbor, and concrete pillboxes housing machine-guns were constructed on the slopes overlooking the bay. Deep tunnels were dug in the rocky hills to serve as air-raid shelters, and it was reported that any attempt to seize Hongkong and her mass of modern fortifications would be long and costly. But Japanese forces took Hongkong in a few days by a siege neither so long nor so costly as predicted, and they are now well on their way to Singapore, a naval base heretofore reported as being practically impregnable.

Through cleverly worded statements, Japanese officials have succeeded in getting American newsmen, and hence the American public, to think in a way most advantageous to the Nipponese war-lords. One American reporter said that Japanese officials admitted that they were carefully planning any statements they issued so that they would have the proper effect upon the American people. High Jap officials told us that they were going to produce a desired reaction in the United States, and they did. Few of us were really alarmed over Japan's supposed "saber-rattling," but we realized how gullible we had been when we saw that saber pierce the backs of American soldiers. Today's news reports and analyses seem to be just as inaccurate as have been those in the past, and American people seem to be just as willing to believe them. Contradictory reports upon the age and ability of Japanese soldiers have been circulated. An "expert" who had supposedly interviewed an American general on the battle scene in the Philippines reported that the Nipponese attackers were youths about seventeen years old. They were, he says, poorly equipped and poorly disciplined, and when they charged they ran one directly behind another, so that one American bullet often killed two Japanese. A recent issue of *Time* magazine, on the other hand, contradicts these statements. Japanese soldiers, it says, are tough and hardy and very well disciplined. Don't underestimate the Japanese because of their short stature and ill-fitting clothes.

Other reports which unthinking persons are likely to overestimate are the predictions of radio news analysts. Recently there have been numerous rumors of a growing revolutionary spirit within Germany. These reports have been interpreted in various ways. Washington officials have said that they were probably spread by the German government itself in order to make the allied people over-confident and therefore less willing to exert all their efforts toward defeating the Axis. Other experts interpreted these reports as probably exaggerated, but meaning that a revolution within

Germany would be shortly forthcoming. Differing opinions on the news only serve to confuse the public if people accept interpretation for fact. So don't adopt any man, even an "expert," as the final authority on the subject. Think about the different ideas and compare them, but don't form premature conclusions.

They Used to Sell Gas

MORTON MOSKOV

Rhetoric II, Theme 5, 1941-1942

IN THIS DAY OF KEEN COMPETITION, ONE OIL COMPANY, to outdo another, has to provide something extra. This was very simple at first—before World War I. Wartime brought the first drive-in gas stations, and then, during the 1920's, when gas sales were quadrupling every four years, the oil companies began dotting the highways with expensive stations, and the evolution of Service was underway. Stations began to look like French chateaux, attendants looked as if they had just walked off a movie lot—and the competition grew.¹

Back in the early 1900's when a gas station was nothing more than a pump at the roadside, the motorist drove up and the attendant pumped his gas by hand. "Got a chamois rag to wipe my windshield?" he asked.

"Go back into the barn, and I think you'll find one on the workbench," was the reply.

The customer went in, found it, and wiped his windshield himself. He did *not* have his shoes shined, his hair cut, his teeth brushed, his hat blocked, and a carnation placed in his buttonhole.

They were mean men, the attendants, in the old days—so different from the affectionate gentlemen whom we are so fortunate to have replenishing our fuel supplies now. Could it be that the point of view of the gas station attendant used to be the customer's gas tank, and is now his pocketbook? Could it be that the car is serviced not so much for the love of the owner as for love of his money? You're darned right it could!

For example, there is a certain station which Uncle Thomas and Aunt Bess visit every day. Every day they have their tires checked; every day Aunt Bess wonders if the water in the battery is where it should be; every day Uncle Thomas thinks his fan needs a little oil. The princess who could feel a pea under twenty mattresses had nothing on Aunt Bess. She prefers thirty pounds of air in front and twenty-nine in the back; in the spare,

¹Homan, G. F., "Fill 'er Up?" *American Magazine*, CXXVI (December, 1938), 28-29.

thirty-four. *But they buy their gas from that station*—and will, I suppose, until some competitor offers a free polishing job with every five gallons.

Statistics show that two out of three motorists who drive their cars into service stations to ask for information purchase something, even though the attendants strive to give the advice in such a way as to keep the tourists from feeling that there is any obligation to buy.² It requires a man with the skin of a walrus to receive from a filling-station man information as to what road to take, at what campus to stop, and in which streams to fish, without buying at least a quart of oil.

The service station owners know that these little courtesies pay, and that is why they give them. The manager of one large establishment put it very nicely when he said, "Because of a liberal policy, suppose we do spend ten thousand a year more than we would otherwise. This expenditure has probably converted a thousand dissatisfied or merely passive customers into active salesmen. A thousand salesmen working an indefinite period for ten dollars each is a very cheap method of selling."³

Complying with the service station policy of not overlooking any possible sources of revenue, the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey began, in 1930, to sell tires.⁴ Other oil companies followed quickly. The same company added automobile lamp bulbs; others followed quickly. This game of "Follow the Leader" continued through razor blades, golf balls, cigarettes *via* automatic vending machines, and storage batteries—each company seizing its chance to be "leader," with the others following quickly.

Thus filling stations were fast taking the place that the country store once held. They undertook to satisfy every conceivable need of the motorist on the road. In addition to automobile sundries and supplies, they furnished sandwiches, coffee, hot dogs, pie, candy, tobacco, canned goods, lipstick, cold cream, soap, and aluminum wear. To illustrate, one owner said, "Whenever a dame lingers a minute in the place, I try her for a first-aid kit. Ten to one there's none in the car, with them aknowing all the time they ought to have it. Then I sell her enough extra bandages to fit out a hospital, and a box or two of cotton."⁵

At another station, near a famous bathing beach, was a real merchant. "Everyone has a side-line and most of them sell Coca-Cola and soft drinks. Not me. They're messy and cost a pile of money for ice. What I wanted was a side-line that wouldn't draw a swarm of flies. So here's what I did.

²Sparkes, B., "Fill 'er Up," *Saturday Evening Post*, CXCIV (November 20, 1926), 24.

³Coombs, A., "Courtesy 'Plus'—and a \$1,750,000 Business," *System*, XLVI (July, 1924), 50.

⁴"More Gas Stations Will Sell Tires—Also Gum, Candy, Smokes," *Business Week*, (September 3, 1930), 13.

⁵"The Filling Station as General Store," *Literary Digest*, XC (August 21, 1926), 68.

They come out here and go in bathing and burn themselves red. So I put in cold creams and lotions. First I put in the ten-cent size. That was worse'n a dry hole over at the oil wells. The little bottles don't hold enough when they get a real tanning. Usually they come here in parties of two girls and two fellows, and the guys fall for the fifty-cent size. The four of them smear themselves all over, and by the time they've drest, the burn's all gone."⁶

At times station owners have gone to unusual lengths to give their customers "a little extra service." Some stations on the road have served free lemonade and cookies to their patrons.⁷ One dealer, who was also a justice of the peace, offered to perform a free marrying service if anyone in a car that took ten gallons of gas happened to want to get married.⁸ In 1935 an oil company opened in New York a revolving service station in which cars were driven onto a giant turntable and serviced in assembly-line fashion.⁹

Neither Marshall Field nor Woolworth, nor any other great merchant prince ever used the scheme by which one filling station operator sought to survive in a highly competitive field in the West. This man, after years of shaking dice with those who patronized his first business venture, a cigar stand, set up a spindle wheel on the lot of his filling station. Customers who were so inclined could joust with him in front of this device to see whether they paid for their gas and oil or received it as free as air and water. Until the sheriff interfered, the owner had many patrons who were not concerned because his pump prices were slightly higher than those of his competitors.¹⁰

There are times when the filling-station owners wish that they had never started the whole business. The reason is, of course,—human nature. The realization that he can receive almost any kind of service by merely asking for it, at times renders the motorist fantastic in his demands. The attendant must be amazingly versatile. He must know where to buy a nightcap with a tassel. He must know something about plumbing—because many of these trailers have their own washrooms. He must be an authority on geography, weather, sports in season, and international affairs. He must be able to change the baby's diapers. He must have a running-board manner that is as carefully cultivated as a physician's bedside manner. For the information requested of him, one would expect that he spends his spare moments in a cubicle memorizing, in turn, whole volumes of the encyclopedia.

Sometimes the attendant's hardest task is that of keeping his self-control.

⁶*Ibid.*, 69.

⁷Sparkes, *loc. cit.*

⁸Homan, *op. cit.*, 29.

⁹"Revolving Auto Service Stations," *Scientific American*, CLII (May, 1935), 260.

¹⁰Sparkes, *loc. cit.*

He has to do this when he gets an I.W.W. (information, wind, and water) customer. One attendant who had such a customer related the following experience. "An I.W.W. with a new twist stops by this afternoon. He gets his information, wind, and water, and he says he doesn't want any gas. 'But will you check my oil?' he says.

"I find it's worn about as thin as water. You really need a gallon, I say.

"'Fine,' he says, 'I thought I needed some, so I stopped at the grocery store and bought it.' Then he reaches into his back seat and hands me a gallon can full of oil.

"As I pour it in, I wonder whether this I.W.W. would have the nerve to go into a hotel dining-room, pick out the best table, and then pull a chicken out of a package and hand it to the waiter, explaining, 'I wanted some chicken, so I stopped at the grocery store. Well done, please.' I decide that he would have the nerve."¹¹

Motorists have become so accustomed to service that it is no longer regarded as a courtesy but is expected and demanded. At one time self-service stations were established, at which the price of gasoline was less than at other places because the customers helped themselves, dropping quarters or half dollars into slots in the side of the pumps. *But the customer had to help himself.* And most men and women prefer those stations where the arrival is greeted cordially by a squad of men who fill the radiator, attend to the tires, clean the windshield, and tenderly dust off the upholstery before their leader dares to inquire whether the sahib would permit him to consult the oil gauge. So the self-service stations failed.

Rest rooms were first offered, I am sure, for advertising rather than for relieving the motorists' anxiety. But things have reached a point now where, unless the rest room has an automatic record player, *Good Housekeeping* complains. Many are the station owners who, at one time or another, have found a customer using the wash-basin to bathe his pekingese.

¹¹Homan, *loc. cit.*

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Safe Crossing

GILBERT McCONNELL

Rhetoric II, Theme 13, 1941-1942

I COULDN'T SEE THE FRONT OF THE BARGE. THERE WAS too much fog. Looking around me I could see only about a dozen of the two hundred workmen on the barge.

The motor of the launch that was propelling us sputtered, was silent for an instant, then caught again.

"Keep 'er going, Patsy," sang out a voice from somewhere in the fog. "The dam is only a little way below. If we smash into that—"

There was muttering among the men. "Patsy's drunk. He's always drunk. Ought to have his license taken away."

"Took the last load three hours to get across."

"We wouldn't have a chance in that icy water."

The motor wheezed again. This time it didn't start. We stood there silently, breathlessly. I watched the gray spirals of fog curl up from the water and merge with the impenetrable blanket around us. There was no sound except the grinding of the starter on the launch, and muffled curses from the operator. We were not conscious of movement, but we knew that we were floating swiftly toward the dam. From far up the river came the dismal hoot of a late steamer. The man next to me started nervously and looked upstream. I glanced at his face. It looked gray in the fog. I wondered if it was gray.

This was the last load of men for the day. I had checked in the last man before I got on the barge. We had stopped work early on Turkey Island because it was dangerous to cut trees in the murky weather. We didn't tell the men what had happened to the first load: they had been lost and had wandered around the river half the afternoon before they got ashore. There was no compass on the boat, since the crossing was less than a mile.

Apparently the men working on the motor were making progress. There were bantering words and a relieved chuckle. The tension of the men let up. A few seconds later we were again moving under mechanical power.

"That was close!" exclaimed one of the men, letting his breath out with a whistling sound between his teeth.

"I wasn't afraid," said a thin voice that cut the air like a knife. I recognized the voice. It belonged to "Preacher" Williams, the bore of the crew, who constantly burdened everyone with his religious, political, and social beliefs. "If you men would read the Bible you'd know that a man can't really die. Heaven is going to be better for me than breaking my back for these slavedrivers. How about you, Mac? Were you afraid?"

Mac, a burly Irishman, was sitting on a box of tools with his frayed overcoat collar pulled up around his ears. His lips were blue with cold and his teeth were chattering. "Yeah," he answered carelessly, "I was scared. I'm afraid to die. Maybe there's a Heaven for guys like you, Preacher, but I'll never get there."

The conversation of the men was suddenly arrested by an argument that came plainly from the launch.

"I tell you you're going in a circle. Give me that wheel!"

There was a shuffling of feet, then another voice. "You're heading toward the dam. Shut off the motor and listen for the fog horn."

We drifted with the motor silent. The sound of the horn came plainly over the water, but not a man in the crowd could tell definitely the direction from which it came. One thing we knew—safety was upstream; downstream was destruction. We threw chips into the river, hats, gloves, anything that would float. They seemed to lie motionless beside the barge. In the dense fog we could see no stationary object. The objects kept their relative positions. We did not seem to be moving; the hats on the water did not seem to be moving; everything seemed static. Yet we knew that everything on the water was moving swiftly.

There was a terse order to the men. "Get on the life-preservers."

Men stampeded toward the rail and grasped frantically at the life preservers. Preacher was near me. I saw him lunge toward the rail. The lifebelt slipped from his hands into the water. His eyes were wild as he looked around for another. But the barge was overloaded. There was not an extra. I saw Mac standing back a little. He was watching Preacher and grinning. He didn't have his life-preserver on, but stood holding it in his hand. After a minute he tossed it to Preacher. The little man didn't protest. He got into it hurriedly. Mac turned around, pulled up his collar, and calmly sat down on the box again.

The motors were going full speed ahead. It was impossible to tell how fast we were going or even whether we were making any progress at all. We could not see more than a few yards, but the men stood at the rail and peered anxiously into the fog.

Suddenly something huge and dark loomed up in front of us. We were almost upon it and going forward with terrific momentum. Men shouted excitedly. Some started to take to the water. Gears ground harshly as the engine was thrown into reverse. Then the barge ground into the sand and we were at the shore at last.

The men moved onto the shore without speaking.

"Only the grace of God saved us this time," cried Preacher, shaking his head and smiling at everybody.

"Damn, this wind is cold," Mac said.

Street Corner

MADELEINE MACKEY

Rhetoric II, Theme 14, 1941-1942

"TIME, BUD?"

"No."

"Ain't that a watch you're wearin'?"

"Yeah."

"Then gimme the time."

"No."

"What the hell's the matter with you? Why wontcha gimme the time?"

"My watch don't run."

"Why the hell don't it?"

"Listen; I ain't botherin' you. Lemme alone."

"I was just askin'. Jeez, you can't kill a guy for askin'—"

"Who's killin' a guy?"

"O.K., Bud, don't get sore. I just asked why your watch don't run so you can't gimme the time. As I says, you can't kill a guy for—"

"O.K. O.K. So I got it wet."

"O.K.—Get it wet in the rain?"

"Yeah. That's it—got it wet in the rain."

"Never quits rainin' here. Ever seen it rain like here? Never quits. Damn rain never quits. Ever seen it rain like here?"

"No."

"I never neither. Rains like hell here.—Don't talk much, do you, Bud?"

"Why should I?"

"Don't get sore. I like talkin'. A guy can't just stand on street corners alla time. A guy's gotta do somethin'. You new here?"

"Yeah."

"When'd you come?"

"Today."

"Where from?"

"Nosey, ain't you?"

"Don't get sore. I was just talkin' to you. Where'd you say you come from?"

"Didn't say."

"Yeah. As I say, a guy can't just stand on street corners alla time. A guy's gotta do somethin'. He can't spend all his time just pressin' his pants on a bench neither.—Say, your pants sure need pressin'. Them pants is sure muddy. Where you been in them pants?"

"None of your business."

"O.K. O.K. Just askin'. Can't kill a guy for askin'.—Got work here?"
"No."

"You come to work here?"

"Yeah, I come to work here."

"What you worked at?"

"Everthin'."

"Everthin'? Yeah. Same here. I worked at everthin'. But now there ain't nothin'. Know any guys here?"

"No."

"You won't get no job here, then. You gotta know guys to get a job here.—Say, your clothes sure is muddy. Even your hands. You sure got big hands. Where'd you get your hands so muddy?"

"Listen, Bud, I wasn't botherin' you none. Can't you lemme alone?"

"Sure, Bud. Just askin'. As I says, you can't ——"

"Hey, who's comin' through the fog?"

"Talkin' now, huh? Thought you couldn't talk. Just the cop."

"Cop?"

"Yeah. These cops don't bother us. Big Dutchman on this beat. He'll move us on to the next corner. That ain't on this beat."

"Cops don't bother you, huh?"

"Christ, no. Evenin', officer."

"Evenin', boys. Afraid you'll have to move on. No loiterin' allowed. The flop house is three blocks down below the hill. Ten cents for a meal and a bed fulla roaches."

"Thanks, officer. Me and Bud, here, was just movin' down there. This ain't no night for standin' on street corners. Too damn much rain here. Ever seen it rain like here?"

"Nope, never. River's risin', too. Just came from the river. They're draggin' it. A man was thrown in there tonight. They're draggin' for his body now."

"Got the man what done it?"

"Nope. Should have him tagged by mornin', though. He slipped and left his prints in the river bank. Dumb guy. Leaves his prints in the mud. Well, move along, boys."

"Sure, me and Bud was just movin' on."

"Comin', Bud? Comin' down to the flop house?"

"No."

"Why aintcha? Can't stand here all night."

"No."

"Where you goin'?"

"To the river."

"Watch 'em drag?"

"Yeah, watch 'em drag."

Chaiim

MORTON MOSKOV

Rhetoric II, Theme 15, 1941-1942

THE FROST-COVERED DOOR OF BERSTEIN'S "EPPES TSU Essen" Delicatessen opened, and Chaiim squeezed his way in past a couple who were just leaving. As he entered, the change from the cold outside air to the warm atmosphere of sizzling hamburgers and hot pastrami formed a mist over his glasses. He laid down his bundle of newspapers and paused for a moment. Then he drew from his pocket a large, dirty, blue polka-dot handkerchief and started to wipe his glasses. He wasn't looking at them, though. It's hard to say what he was looking at. His eyes were bad.

"Watch out, Chaiim," said Sam from behind the counter.

Chaiim picked up his papers and stepped aside to let the customer pay his check. Then, pulling one paper from the pile under his arm, he started down the line of tables. Paper? Paper? Paper? Paper?

"Hey, Chaiim, what's the headline?" called a moocher.

"Why dontcha buy one?" Chaiim said earnestly. "It's only three cents."

The moocher laughed. "Are you kidding?"

Chaiim folded the paper to hide the headline from view.

"Hey, boy," a well-dressed gentleman signaled, stuffing a sandwich into his mouth.

Chaiim was thirty-eight years old and didn't like to be addressed "Hey, boy." He handed him a paper.

"Got change for a dollar?" the man asked.

Chaiim counted out ninety-seven cents and clanked it on the table.

"Yeah," he said.

From there he went over to the table where Mrs. Cohen usually sat. From the bottom of his pile, he pulled out her special copy of *Der Tohg* and laid it on the table.

"A hundred and thirty dollars!" she exclaimed to Mrs. Rosen, as she reached for her purse. "It's highway robbery! My obstetrician never charged me over fifty dollars apiece."

"Well, you get 'em wholesale," said Mrs. Rosen.

Chaiim recognized a gang of fourteen-year-old girls near the back of the store. He went over to them.

"I got a new song sheet," he said.

"Is 'Moonlight Reverie' in it?"

"Everything's in it."

Betty turned to the girls. "There's five of us—that's two cents apiece," she said.

Chaiim handed them a song sheet.

"Let me take two cents?" asked Ruth. "I'll pay you tomorrow."

"O.K.," said Shirley.

Chaiim suddenly dropped his papers, let out a muffled yell, and stamped his foot. The boys at an adjacent table burst into laughter at the success of their hot-foot.

"Here, I'll help you," one of them said, and doused Chaiim's foot with someone's milkshake.

The boys roared.

Chaiim didn't move. He just stood there and looked at his foot, cross-eyed. A tear trickled down his face. Then he began to tremble. He began to tremble violently.

"Chaiim."

Dave was calling him from one of the booths. He was with his girl friend, Rose.

"Chaiim—Chaiim, c'mere."

Chaiim walked over slowly.

"Sit down, Chaiim. I'll get your papers for you."

Dave went and picked up the papers from the floor. Chaiim sat down and wiped his nose with the sleeve of his mackinaw. Dave and Rose watched him as he regained his composure. His chapped lips were wide apart, and his jaw was hanging. A white foam trickled out of one corner of his mouth and down his chin. And he was cross-eyed. No one could love that face.

Chaiim began to feel better.

"The Russians killed ten thousand Germans," he muttered.

"Today?"

"That's what it says."

Chaiim reached for a paper. He showed it to them.

"Better gimme a paper, Chaiim," said Dave, reaching into his pocket.

"I want one, too . . . to take home, Dave," said Rose.

After a few minutes, Chaiim got up.

"I'm all right now," he said.

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, I gotta sell my papers."

Chaiim fixed his papers under his arm and headed for the door. He stopped there for a moment to raise his collar. Then he opened the door.

"See you tomorrow, Sam," he said.

"O.K., Chaiim," Sam said, wrapping up a corned-beef sandwich to go out.

The Hermit of the Slough

ROBERT E. TURNER

Rhetoric I, Theme 16, 1941-1942

ONE USUALLY HEARS OF HERMITS ONLY IN BOOKS; IN modern life real hermits are rare. I speak not of down-and-outs or castaways who hang around the dark and dismal places of the big cities, but of the real thing—a man who lives by himself alone in the woods in a rickety old shack.

Jake was a hermit. At least *I* think he was. In the eyes of the townspeople he was probably just a tramp or a hobo. But he was independent, and had his own hut, his fire, and his dozen dogs. He didn't have to wait in a breadline for his meals, or hang around street corners waiting for a hand-out as the derelicts of the big cities do. Yes, Jake was a full-fledged "gen-yoo-ine" hermit, with no strings attached.

When I think of Jake, the first thing I see is great big, clumsy, black rubber fishing boots. These boots were Jake's trademark; in fact, they were so dear to him that he wouldn't be seen without them. Anyway, he had no shoes. When Jake put on his boots he could walk or wade through mud, rocks, field cactus, or the Slough, to gain his dwelling. Despite the clumsiness of his footgear, he walked briskly with a slight stoop, swinging his sapling cane, and followed by his dogs, his boots beating out a rapid "clump-clump-clump" on the pavement.

Jake's face was startling—a visage not exactly frightening in the light of day, but one which we fellows would dislike to come upon suddenly by moonlight. When Jake looked at us, he really *looked*, and we would involuntarily shrink back a pace or two from the leer of those faintly blood-shot, dark eyes. There was no need to be afraid, however, for Jake couldn't help how he looked; besides, he had never hurt anyone. But it was rumored among us that when he really got steam up, Jake could heave a paving brick half a block. Above his eyes protruded white, bristly eyebrows which moved and so increased the penetrating power of his glance. When he spoke, his bushy beard waggled and exposed an almost toothless mouth. What teeth he had left were ochred from tobacco juice, with here and there a flash of yellow gold. Every spring, he cut off his year's growth of whiskers. Yes, Jake shaved, once a year, in the springtime.

Jake's shack stood in a shallow ravine at the edge of a high road at the east end of town. On one side of the road were the homes of bona fide citizens; on the other, down in the ravine, was Jake's shack. It was precariously constructed of something that seemed like driftwood, with a roof covered with sheets of tin and topped off with a drainpipe chimney that

smoked like Vesuvius. One day the whole shack began smoking. In fact, it smoked so much that the fire department came roaring out to extinguish the blaze. This misfortune was nothing to Jake; he built another shack out in the woods near the river, with materials gathered from Lord-knows-where. If Jake were set out in the middle of the Sahara he would build something with four walls and a roof. Well, he lived there through the severe winter of 1936. The ice on the river, four feet thick, resembled a glacier with great jagged pieces sticking upwards. When the thaw came, the river overflowed its banks and brought with it the ice. Jake retired to safety, but those huge floating slabs of ice ground his shack to kindling and swept the remains downstream. Scourged by the proverbial fire and water, but undaunted, he constructed another one on a wooded peninsula surrounded by the river and a backwater called the Slough.

This present shanty is constructed as usual of bits of lumber gathered from nowhere, with sheets of galvanized iron interspersed to give the structure stability. From here each day Jake sets forth to draw water from a spring trickling from an iron pipe along the road embankment, or to inspect his traps, or to draw in his fish lines and nets. Jake's catches from the traps consist of squirrels, rabbits, and muskrats. He feels particularly pleased when he is able to snare a muskrat, for he can sell the fur for a couple of dollars. He hauls in no aristocratic fish, but only the smelly carp and bull-head. This makes no difference to Jake though; he isn't squeamish about what goes into his stomach.

Jake will allow no hunting on his land, and the first crack of a rifle or shotgun will bring the old man and his dozen curs of indeterminate ancestry charging down the path. I met him once thus, and he informed me in no uncertain, and hardly refined, terms to get myself the blank out of there. *He* didn't want no young "squirts" shootin' up his place and bullets singin' around his house, no, sir! Recalling his prowess with the paving brick, I moved, *fast*.

The mystery of Jake's past has always intrigued me, but I suppose I shall never know it. As far as I know, he has never told anyone. It was at one time rumored among us "small fry" that he had been a college man, since one of the fellows got a glimpse of a shelf of old, thick books in Jake's cabin. Our ignorance of Jake's past most likely results from an insufficient interest in him. Since no one wants to be the friend of an old hobo, people do not care who he was and where he came from. Just the same, I should like to unravel the thread of his past life and see what made him what he is—whether it was tragedy, ostracism, an unsavory past, or just plain failure.

But while I speculate, Jake keeps living his life on the island—living peacefully and alone with his dogs, his fire, his pipe, and his juicy chewing tobacco.

The Gullah Negroes

T. G. BELDEN

Rhetoric II, Theme 11, 1941-1942

AS NIGHT FALLS, THE SWAMPS GIVE OFF A HEAVY, sweet-smelling mist which slowly turns into a thick fog. The sea breezes scrape through the stiff marsh grass and palmettos. The drum fish in the tidal creek beat a strange tattoo in the water and, as the tide recedes, clusters of oysters snap shut suddenly, squirting thin streams of water, which spatter into the surrounding pluff mud. Even the faint sound of the fiddler crabs can be heard as they swarm over the sticky swamp in search of small prey.

Out across the bar, toward the vast ocean, a single yellow lantern swings idly, indicating an oyster fisherman who has returned too soon for the flood tide. He must wait until morning to clear the bar.

At sunrise the tide is high enough to allow the oysterman to sail toward shore. His knotty, black, bare arms push deftly against the tiller as he guides his over-loaded sloop into the tidal creek. He watches his orange sail to see that he is making the greatest possible speed against the head wind.

A grin creeps across his thick lips. He can smell the salt pork a half mile away—his woman has breakfast ready. He can almost taste the fried pork, grits, and gravy. . . .

Suddenly, as he rounds the bend, his white-washed cabin is in view. It is almost hidden by huge live oaks and the long beards of Spanish moss hanging from the branches. And there is his woman, in bright red calico, puffing furious clouds of smoke from her clay pipe. He can tell from the wet glisten of her coal black face that she is angry, wondering where he has been all night.

Then they shout to each other in a language that no white man can understand, their native Gullah tongue.

"Hena, ah bey de do in de. Ifen yo don shim heah ah tro yo chuc awa!" she cries angrily. But there is no use to record any more of their conversation. We could get only a word here or there—like *shim* which means *I run* or *you ran* or *he runs* or any other form of the verb.

From nowhere children come running—over a dozen of them—running down to the edge of the mud bank to see the catch their pappy made and to see what he has brought them from the Ladies' Island store. But not all of them are his own children. Six of them are adopted—lost their home and family in the hurricane last fall. That makes a family of seventeen all told,

but the oysterman is not concerned with the number—he cannot count even to ten. He has brought them all rock candy, and there is bedlam. For his wife he has vaseline for her hair, a hair straightener (a copper device which is a cross between a curling iron and a curry comb), and more red calico. For himself? Tobacco.

It is Friday. The beginning of a pleasant week-end is at hand. Pap misses his oldest daughter. Where is she? Mammy explains that she is “habben dem shots” at the clinic. And the oldest son is “gone”—in jail, Pap knows. But the son is allowed to come home week-ends from the road gang. This is not the least strange. And his second daughter—Pap knows she gets home every other week-end, and this is the “other” week-end. He smiles at the thought of her. She is looked up to by the entire family. She works for “de buckra,” meaning the quality white folks, who give her four dollars a week and “toting” privileges.

This particular Saturday turns out to be a double holiday. In the morning one of the “chillen” found a dead pig in the woods behind the house. The buzzards were easily driven away. Whose pig was it? Alive—nobody’s; dead—anybody’s.

Saturday afternoon is spent pleasantly, lolling in the sun, digesting a heavy dinner of roast pig. In the evening a combination of thankfulness and entertainment is in order. The entire family walks two miles down the muddy road to the church.

Church does not take up at any special time; it just starts with sundown and ends when the congregation is exhausted. The first hour of the service is devoted to singing hymns, which become louder and more rhythmical until all inhibitions are thrown off. The singers stamp around the wood stove, clapping their hands, crying at the top of their lungs.

Then the “Bishop” steps to the pulpit and delivers a sermon—a weird account of the last moments of a friend who was hanged at the prison last week. The Gullahs sit with their mouths hanging open in awe. They are childish, but they are human enough to be held by morbid curiosity. Then more singing, more dancing, and testimonials. During the testimonials some of the members are emotionally carried away. They roll on the floor, jump wildly, and shriek. They are casting devils out of their souls. The Bishop nods approvingly.

After church the oysterman and his family walk slowly home. It is dark and still. The family holds close together. This is one of those rare moonless nights when the beat of the drum can be heard across the black water. Over a distant island there is a red glow in the sky. A big fire on Dafasaw Island and the booming of the drum mean only one thing to this Gullah family—voodoo. The black art is practiced on this Gullah-inhabited island,

Dafasaw, where no white man lives. On whom will the "evil eye" be cast tonight?

The tide is again receding. In the blackness the fiddlers are swarming over the wet mud of the marsh. The mist is slowly rising, blotting out our view.

"Whither Midst Falling Dew"

CARL HARTMAN

Rhetoric I, Theme 6, 1941-1942

THERE ARE TWO THINGS IN THIS WORLD FOR WHICH I have a vehement, unconquerable hatred—a hatred that causes an astounding rise in my blood pressure, and sends me into frenzied raving. One is sheep, and the other is ducks. My hatred of sheep I can trace back to my Texan ancestry and cattle-raising relatives, but that's another story. My hatred of ducks comes purely from personal experience, and that is this story.

The trouble all started in the little town of Bethlehem, in Connecticut. One sunny autumn afternoon I was sitting on the front porch of a friend's house. I had my feet up on the railing and wasn't doing a thing but sitting there, thinking how pleasant a quiet little town was after two months in New York City. My friend Bill came out the front door and said, "How about going duck hunting tomorrow?" I was looking at a girl going down the street and didn't hear him very well, I guess. At any rate, I made one of the worst mistakes in my life. I said, "Sure." Then, promptly, I forgot all about it, in my interest in seeing where the girl lived. But not Bill—he didn't like girls. That's another story, too.

The next morning my alarm went off at six. Now, I am not used to being awakened from a sound sleep at such an hour, and I wasn't in a very good humor. I threw a book at the alarm clock, and missed. It hit the window shade instead, sending up the shade with a terrible bang, and a horrible sight met my eyes. It was raining. Not a nice, warm summer rain, either. Ah, no! It was raining a slow, cold drizzle that made the trees and bushes look either dead or as if they wished they were dead. Suddenly I brightened. "Ha!" I thought. "We won't go. I can go back to sleep." But Bill had different ideas. We went.

Most people go hunting to kill something, for which purpose they use the most deadly weapons they can find. The usual armament for duck hunting is a heavy shotgun, but here again Bill had ideas. "There's no sense in just killing lots of ducks," said he. "That's not sportsmanlike. What do you say we use twenty-twos instead?" I stared at him, bewildered. I wondered if

he had lost his mind. I pleaded with him. I argued with him. I even threatened him. But Bill is a big boy. We started out with our bean-shooters. They were nice guns, with telescope sights; on a target range they would have been grand. But for ducks—"Dear Lord," I thought. "This can't be me doing this. I must be dreaming."

"Come on," said Bill. "What are we waiting for?"

All day long we waded through water of different depths, anywhere from our ankles up to our necks. Hour after hour we hunted ducks that didn't seem to want to be hunted. It never stopped raining, and there is nothing colder than a Connecticut marsh in the rain. Bill had a fine time. I cursed the weather, the swamp, the ducks, the guns, and Bill, but every time I moved that we go home he would point out that a little exercise was good for me. There wasn't much I could do about it, because he had all the food, and I didn't even know the way home.

Did you ever try to hit a duck in the rain with a twenty-two? We burned up boxes and boxes of shells. We walked for miles. We got lost twice, and were almost fainting from hunger. We got, all told, four poor little ducks, and three of those were no good because the soft nosed shells had torn them all to pieces. Bill, however, was delighted. "I don't usually get any," he explained. I didn't say anything to that. I was too tired, and was afraid I would explode.

We got back to town about supper time. We were wet through, and I had caught a cold. As we walked down Main Street, with Bill waving our one good duck over his head so everybody could see it, a nice-looking man came out of a little house and started walking with us.

"Have any luck?" he asked.

"I'll say," said Bill, who was somehow still feeling good. "We shot four, but this is the only good one."

The nice-looking man made marks in a little book he took from his pocket. I was too sleepy to see what he wrote. Then he stopped walking, and so did we.

"I," he said, "am the game warden. Ducks went out of season last week. This will cost you fifty dollars—twenty-five apiece."

I don't like ducks.

Winter Night

Even if I knew what the snowflakes were like, I don't think I would tell. It might be that I would call them lost star-children, and some people would laugh at that. It is much nicer to stand here, just after dark, on this lonely corner, and keep my thoughts to myself. The light falls softly on the snow; the snow in the street is a sheet of unbroken whiteness. I am alone, and glad to be alone. A few houses brood in the distance, their black hulks freshly capped in ermine. Occasionally a light is turned on or off, like a visible change of mind.

—TRYGUE JOHN MASENG

Michigan's Music Camp

EUNICE ALLYN

Rhetoric II, Theme 7, 1941-1942

AS THE CONDUCTOR OF OUR RICKETY NIGHT TRAIN ANNOUNCES "Interlochen," I start from my uncomfortable slump to see only scrub pines, hazy with mist, outlined against the rising sun. The train jerks and groans before letting us off. The small station looks forsaken in the chilly dawn, until a mannish-looking woman with iron-gray hair suddenly appears and loads us into the camp bus, an eight-wheeled shed built around two beds, six straight chairs, and a small coal stove.

We rattle into the camp grounds, and my heart sinks as I see nothing but forlorn, rambling, seemingly uninhabited buildings hiding from each other behind the pines—quite unlike the pictures in the circular. We are deposited on the front porch of the hotel to wait for breakfast. As we shiver convulsively and swat at high-powered mosquitoes, Mr. Giddings, one of the camp founders, whom I recognize by his bald head, his white goatee, and his stern glance (acquired from decades of teaching youngsters how to breathe), ambles serenely up the walk and darkens the atmosphere with his favorite mosquito joke. I pace desperately around the grounds and inspect the buildings. Losing all hope, I decide to inquire about an early train back to Chicago. As though anticipating my thought, a sleepy trumpet stumbles through reveille, hinting that bacon and eggs are not far off.

By the end of this miserable, upsetting day, we are all in our proper cabins and outfitted with baggy blue knickers and heavy black sox. Cold and exhausted, I fall asleep, with little hope for the coming eight weeks.

A bugle shrieks. I jump up with a start that sends my head crashing against the rafter just above my upper bunk. It is only 6:45. Though I know this is the set hour of arising, I am unprepared for our counselor's insistent shouts, punches, and vigorous pulling off of covers. There is no safe recourse but to follow meekly the herd outside and become part of the strenuous group that easily bends down and touches its toes, knees straight, muscles unflinching. As this program is repeated every day of the week, the necessity of sparing my head and my feelings much abuse causes me, in time, to wake up two minutes early and nerve myself against the onslaught of the bugle.

After a mad search for baggy knickers, black sox, and boy scout garters, each of us is given a distasteful duty to perform before breakfast. Mine is the most despicable of all—mopping the floor; and I rebel against having to do it on an empty stomach. Though we try to get through a half-hour's job in ten minutes, our counselor, who looks as though the best of life has

passed her by unnoticed, sees to it that we clean every crack, shelf, and rafter.

Breakfast is a pancake feast, and after putting away stacks of the heavily syruped indigestibles, I am thankful to be spared from bending over a mop just then. In fact, life is beginning to seem brighter and almost pleasant, when a loud buzzer warns us to run or we'll be late for orchestra rehearsal. I think longingly of possible pleasant snoozes in the sun or of canoe rides on the lake, and am annoyed at the early rehearsal. Later, I discover that though Michigan summers are famous for coolness, towards midday the sun sends down an extra beam or two, unrecorded by the Chamber of Commerce. Then I am glad that orchestra is out of the way and swimming is in order.

Night has always been my favorite time, and Michigan nights are superb. The full moon makes fascinating patterns with the pines and turns the lake into a shimmering, silver sea. When there is no moon, the stars are clear, and the water is such a perfect mirror that one wonders whether he isn't paddling his canoe across the sky and looking up at the lake. In fact, I enjoy the night so much that it is only towards the end of the summer—after many extra rehearsals and much hard work—that I begin to see the point in having taps at ten o'clock.

As the days go by, orchestra becomes exciting. Famous guest conductors make us laugh at their antics and witticisms and draw out of us music that far surpasses the ordinary scratching and blaring of high school players. On Sunday we broadcast over an NBC coast-to-coast hook-up. The tension just before we go on the air, and the thrill as we play the camp "theme" are the high spots of each broadcast.

There are almost a hundred students in the orchestra. Though at first I think of them as competitive strangers to be reckoned with, as I unconsciously drop a smile here and let down a barrier there, I find that they are very willing to get acquainted. Three of us become real pals, and together we hatch wild schemes for creating excitement. For instance, one sunny Sunday "we three" decide that camp life is getting dull. During the band broadcast we sit in the audience out under the trees and shine pocket mirrors on the bassoon and tuba players. As they are temporarily blinded, we gloat like mischievous Till Eulenspiegels over our merry pranks. But just as with poor Till, there is a sudden jolt to our wanton humor. Mr. Giddings, the camp disciplinarian, ominously beckons to us to see him immediately. Since our crime is such a great one, judgment is suspended until the camp board can decide upon the penalty. Our contrition is complete, until we learn that instead of being sent home, each day we are to read certain ethical teachings and particular verses of the Bible. Every afternoon we must explain to Mr. Giddings the meaning of these. "We three" become inseparable and are known as the "Bible sisters." Like good captives of

justice, we are wiser for our experience; we even learn that Mr. Giddings has a sense of humor.

Although a few of my cabin-mates never quite conquer their jealousy of my illustrious membership in the "Bible sister" trio, most of them become good friends. Each of the twelve girls in the cabin comes from a different state, and they are members of diverse races, nationalities, and religions. I learn to understand their beliefs and customs and even include them in the group of "very special friends," to whom I pour out my great dreams, ambitions, and expectations. I find that Japanese, French, German, English, and Jewish girls show equal ability in setting alarm clocks to ring at midnight, and have equal capacity for appreciating the art of concealing frogs, toads, and finely chopped toothbrush bristles in someone else's bed.

Of all my friends, a canoe becomes the most important. It teaches me to love the outdoors and shows me narrow streams slipping away from the lake, with wild bushes and grasses growing high on either side, where rare birds flit about and sing, and from which deer often bound across the narrow water. Because of my growing intimacy with tangled brush and wild creatures, I like to practice in the woods, where my accompaniment is the breeze playing on the trees, and my audience the chipmunks and squirrels. From my canoe far out on Lake Wabekanetta (Water-Lingers-Again), I am inspired by the sunsets, gorgeous symphonies of light and color. As I watch, intense rainbow hues fade and slowly drop into the lake. Delicate pinks and dusky purples replace them. A crescent moon and a single bright star rise on the opposite side. As the end of camp draws near, I sit in my canoe and reminisce. There are big events and daily trifles that I know will be with me long after the toot of a trumpet and the moan of a string bass have left the pines to their own music. There are the Monday afternoons, general camp holidays, when we pile into "Pop" Giddings' bus and rattle across the hills to Traverse City to see a movie, to tease the animals in the zoo, or just to enjoy the freedom of walking where we please, stopping here and there for peanuts, popcorn, and knickknacks, proud to be seen in the blue knickers and black sox. On Monday nights we girls, still in knickers and sox, are herded through the woods to the boys' camp, where we dance till dark on the corn-mealed tennis courts. Here romances bud, and wall-flower complexes are born. Unforgettable is the famous Michigan Cherry Festival in Traverse City. Our band marches in the parade, and the rest of us pack ourselves in with the mob filling both sides of the main street to watch the floats go by, to cheer the queen, and to stain shirts and barrage enemies with big, black cherries—two boxes for nineteen cents. Between classes, before rehearsals, and after concerts, we gather around the pop stand to gossip, to talk to the "camp personalities," and to see what lucky person has recently won Pop Giddings' perpetual offer of an ice-cream cone for perfect breathing.

Though its approach is often mentioned, somehow the last day of camp surprises us. Suddenly realizing its importance, I slip away from friends for a long look at majestic, blue Wabekanetta with her necklace of sparkling sands and her crown of virgin pine. With a few tears I kiss her goodbye and plight my troth.

Packing and prosaic details consume most of this great day, and suddenly it is time for the final concert. The audience is mammoth, and excitement is uncontrolled. The last number, Liszt's "Les Preludes," into which the combined orchestra, band, choir, and faculty pour the fruit of their summer's labor, is tremendously moving. After the concert, there is just time to change the familiar blue knickers and black sox for our own strange street clothes and say a few special "goodbyes" before we are again loaded into the rattle-trap bus.

This time the station is alive with activity and chattering. Friends are talking excitedly of the future. Those in love are wishing sadly for the past. All I know is that I never want to leave. As the train approaches, I hurriedly talk to friends of writing, and through tears I blurt out emphatic promises to meet them again at camp next summer. A full moon is rising. The train stops just long enough to claim her own, and then chugs away, past the scrubby pines.

The Link

MERTON J. KAHNE

Rhetoric I, Theme 5, 1941-1942

SOME SCHOOLS FEATURE THEIR PRETTY GIRLS; OTHERS their athletic stars. Our prize exhibit was Cobert. If ever a person presented a study in contrasts, it was he. His unkempt hair, ragged pants, and scuffed shoes have long been established as an integral part of our school tradition. But underneath this crude exterior was a brain whose capacity for knowledge can be surpassed by few.

It was not an uncommon thing to see Cobert arise in a chemistry class and begin a lengthy argument with the instructor as to the truth of some theory presented in the text, or to watch him demonstrate, with ridiculous ease, the solution of some difficult algebraic equation—unconscious all the while of the fact that his shirt-tail was hanging out, and that everyone could clearly see that his neck had not been washed for three days or more. His English teacher stated flatly that, were it not for the excellent content of his themes, she would be forced to fail him in the course, because his papers were usually filled with ten different varieties of dirt, and his handwriting

was hardly legible. He graduated with a 98.33% average, and it is said that he would have made 100 if only he could have persuaded his art teacher to appreciate his surrealist paintings.

It is secretly rumored that the Charm Club, a school organization, voted him the most undesirable person to be marooned on an island with. However, in passing through the corridors of the school, one was sure to hear some boisterous laughter, and upon closer inspection, to find Cobert surrounded by eager youths, enjoying the center of a conversation. On other occasions he was sure to be found in some obscure corner of the building with a group of fellow conspirators, earnestly plotting a minor rebellion against the unfair tactics certain teachers were using in controlling student opinion.

"The Link," as he permitted only his best friends to call him, had an intense desire to know the answer to the unanswerables. His eternal "Why?" drove many teachers to distraction. His favorite relaxation was a long discussion on the subject of the futility of life, or an argument concerning the plausibility of the quantum theory. It is said that he once spent an entire day at a girl's home, arguing with her father until one the next morning about the value of religion. Whether or not he knew what he was talking about was beside the point; he loved an argument for its own sake.

On the evening of graduation, Cobert, hands and face washed, suit pressed, shoes polished, and with a spotless shirt and tie, passed unrecognized throughout the commencement exercises. He would even have received his diploma without being recognized, had he not tripped over his gown in mounting the platform.

I Could See

LEITHA PAULSEN

Rhetoric II, Theme 13, 1941-1942

I CLOSED THE DOOR AS CAREFULLY AS POSSIBLE AND ran upstairs. I walked into the bedroom, stumbled onto the bed, and sank down on the embroidered spread. What did it matter if the spread got wrinkled or not? What did it matter if I were scolded for sitting on it?

It was early evening, and the light coming through the blinds cast shadows about the room, striping the wall with horizontal bars. Slowly I lifted my head, and my eyes followed the shadows. I got up from the bed, dragging the crumpled spread to one side as I slipped off the edge and onto my feet. I took several steps and stood facing the mirror; I brought my

face closer and closer until I could feel my hot breath against the glass. I closed my eyes for a second; then I opened them and looked. The horizontal shadows were on my face; I rubbed my warm hand along my cheek and looked again; the shadows were still there; this time a streak of light fell across my eyes. They were red eyes, filled with tears and a frightened look, and I whispered, "Dear God, why did it have to happen? Why?" I turned away toward the dresser and opened the top drawer. I felt around for a tiny box, and when I found it, I sat down on the floor beside the bed and opened it. Inside was a small ball of lace and a note that read,

"For Ann, in case I don't need it anymore—"

I began to cry again, and I cried so hard that the sobs came in gulps, and it seemed as though my entire body trembled. I held the ball tighter and tighter, and the tears got bigger. I could feel them trickling down my flushed face; once or twice I could taste the salty tears on my lips, and I could see them dropping onto the spread and leaving their stains. As I looked dimly at the ball, I could see my grandmother sitting in her cushioned rocking chair as I stood on the ends of the rockers behind and made the chair go back and forth much too vigorously for a grandma. She was making the dainty lace that she used to put on pillow slips for my mother, my sister, and me and give to us as Christmas presents. She did it so quickly and she never had to watch the stitches. . . . I was holding some of that lace in my hand. I could see her as she sat with her thin, almost transparent, blue-veined hands folded in her lap—her silver hair drawn up from her head and held in place by silver combs—the frilly white lace of her black dress framing a face young and pretty for a grandmother of eighty-five. I could see her in her Sunday hat trimmed with white flowers. It was a large-crowned hat such as most grandmothers wear, but this one looked somehow more aristocratic. I could see her walking in the garden and picking a few of the ripe, red currants from the low, green bushes. The hot sun made her hair sparkle; the red berries gleamed.

I fingered the little ball of lace and looked around the room. It was dark; the horizontal shadows were gone; no more light came in. I put the lace back in the drawer. My face was still hot and swollen, but my tears had stopped. It was peaceful to hold the lace in my hands; I was in another world—a world where Grandma was still alive, making the lace, picking the currants, wearing her Sunday hat. I brushed the hair out of my eyes, turned on the light, and straightened the sadly wrinkled spread.

I much prefer running a race not against men, but against time. To reach for the ground with your toes in a long hip-rolling stride, snatch at it with your spikes, whip it under and behind you with a driving pull of your foot and flip of your ankle, and know you're clipping off distance against seconds is the finest feeling I have ever got out of running. I believe I shall always enjoy doing that as long as I can run.—PAUL B. PHINNEY

The Kishwaukee

PHYLLIS NELSON

Rhetoric I, Theme 16, 1941-1942

I AM THE KISHWAUKEE RIVER. THE WHOLE YEAR around I wind my way through the gently sloping plains of Northern Illinois—over sand and rocks, under bridges, beneath the scorching sun, through the cool forests, year in and year out, through the tiny villages of Kingston and Genoa, to the Miller farm, and on and on. Is my life monotonous?

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Spring:

"Sedrick said that when he was checking fences today the woods were so thick with flowers that it looked as if we'd had another snowfall," said Mother when the children got home from school. A minute later the Model-A was coughing down the lane, carrying all five children on the first flower hunt of the season. You can imagine their disappointment when they found the river risen over the ends of the bridge. But Rex, never daunted, determined to drive the car through the shallow bend. Kenny, not to be outdone, began to walk cautiously on stones out to the bridge. Phyllis, Donna, and Junior, searching for the few flowers on that side of the bridge, heard two simultaneous yells as Rex realized that the car would move neither backward nor forward in the water, and Kenny slipped and sprawled out over the rocks. Two hours later the five children, wet, muddy, and tired, but triumphantly carrying their treasured bouquets, drove the car, now coughing more violently, up the lane.

"Let's walk over to the bridge. I want to ask you something," whispered a youth to a girl. Leaning over the bridge railing, gazing at the silvery, rippling waters, Joe found that words came more easily. "I've been wanting to ask you to go with me to the Senior Prom, Donna, but I thought, that is, I thought up till this afternoon, that you'd rather go with Lyle. Lyle is a swell dancer, and I just blunder along. But, well, anyway, will you go with me?"

"Of course I will," answered Donna. "You can blunder along all you like and I won't mind. I think Lyle talks too much."

The tone of her voice made Joe's heart leap. He grew bolder. "Would you mind going with me all the time?"

"I'd love it," said Donna.

"Whoopee!" Joe shouted, and then, getting control of himself, "Say, we'd better be getting back to the gang, or they'll go off and leave us."

Summer:

"I wouldn't like to be a steer, but I sure envy his life right now," said Paul, looking toward the river. "Old Herman has been wading in the side creek all day." The boys were putting up hay in the sweltering heat of the barn. "Oh, Oh! Rex and Junior are heading toward the swimming hole. I wonder if their mother knows where they're going."

"Last one in is a sissy," yelled Rex, as he yanked off his clothes. A moment later he plunged in, as Junior, always careful and methodical, was still neatly arranging his clothes on an overhanging branch of an elm tree. "Yow," screeched Rex, as he pulled a crab from his toe and threw it across the river.

"I, I don't think I'll go in today," said Junior, pulling his clothes from the branch.

"You're just a fraidy-cat," taunted Rex.

"I am not," said Junior. "I just remembered that I have to decorate my bike for the parade."

"Golly, so do I. Hey, wait for me!"

Junior waited.

Fall:

"I think Tattoo would like to go for a swim," said Phyllis, looking at the puppy as he sat motionless and tense in the canoe.

"Wait until we get in shallower water," said Rex, paddling toward the bridge. "Okay, now put him in." Tattoo, after struggling frantically for a moment, calmed down and puppy-paddled to the bridge. There Donna lifted the dripping but triumphant little animal into her arms.

"This has been the most wonderful summer of my life," said Joe softly, as he and Donna leaned on the bridge railing one evening early in September.

"It's been a lot of fun," said Donna. "It's going to be hard concentrating on history and chemistry after a summer of swimming and tennis. I'll be terribly lonesome without you, Joe."

"Well, we'll have little vacations once in a while, and then there's always next summer," Joe said. "Until then, will you please keep this?" He pressed his class pin into her hand. "I know it'll look sort of sickly beside those fraternity pins down there, but at least you'll know that it carries more meaning than any fraternity pin set with diamonds and rubies."

"Oh, Joe, I think it's beautiful, and I'll wear it always."

Winter:

"Jeanette, I'll race you over to the fire," shouted Martha. Their skate blades sparkled in the moonlight as they whizzed across the frozen river

to the huge bonfire, around which was gathered all the class of '41. Wonder of wonders, Edna had her arm around Adelaide's shoulders, and they were laughing and chatting as if Edna had never called Adelaide anything but a lady. College and business certainly make young people more tolerant of the opinions and ideas of others. Suddenly a shriek rent the air. The bonfire was deserted—everyone ran to the other side of the river. There they found Joe, thoroughly soaked, but laughing, crawling out of the water where the ice had broken through. Babe and George carried Joe to the sleigh and bundled him up like a bug in a rug. A few moments later the jangled notes of "Jingle bells, jingle bells, home to eat we go," drifted back to the river, as the sleigh carried the merry party up the lane.

"Hey, Rex, Junior, where are you?" shouted Kenny, frantically running through the big horsebarn.

"Take it easy, Little One, here we are," answered Rex from the haymow.

"Well, hurry down, Dad's going to take us fish—." Before Kenny could put the "ing" on fishing, Rex was down the ladder and well on his way toward the house. Junior and Kenny were at his heels. An hour and a half later their faces had lost all animation, as they huddled, shivering, beside the holes cut in the ice. Kenny, used to moving around, found it impossible to remain long in one spot. "I'm going up to the house," he said. "I'll be nice and warm while you are—hey, Rex, your line is wiggling."

Rex excitedly pulled in his line and found—a tin can dangling from the end of it. "That finishes it for me," said Rex disgustedly.

"I've got a code," said Junior.

"Well, boys, how do you like ice fishing?" Dad asked.

"Don't mention it," said Rex. "This pole is staying in my locker until spring and real fishing roll around."

. . . .

"Mother, doesn't that river ever get tired of flowing on and on in the same old path, just going to the same old places, and seeing the same old things?" asked a little girl, walking on the bridge with her mother.

"I suppose so, dear," answered her mother, gazing down at the cool, rippling waters.

Activity Woman

Mrs. Klek settled alone in her large house; but a settled life was not the life for her. She was a confirmed "gadder." She was in her glory in the Woman's Club, the Community Civic League, numerous bridge clubs, and in active duty in her ward. She went to every ward meeting; and at voting time there was no one busier than she. Then she appeared at home only at bedtime. At other times the telephone confirmed her numerous appointments; and the doorbell, her numerous friends.—LOUISE PROEHL

Phi Beta Kappa—Not for Me

ALVIN HERSCOVITZ

Rhetoric I, Theme 16, 1941-1942

IN THE FIRST SCENE FOR THE PLAY "*WHAT A LIFE*," THE assistant principal of Center High School is talking with the school's problem child, Henry Aldrich, in an effort to learn the cause of the boy's innumerable difficulties. During the course of their conversation, he asks, "Your father went to Princeton?"

Henry answers dejectedly, "Yes, sir. He was a Phi Beta Kappa, and you know what that means."

Mr. Nelson appears perplexed, "What does it mean?"

Henry replies with assurance, "It's an honor you never forget. And if you're the son of one, you don't ever forget it either."

I remember those lines from the play verbatim, for they make me think of my own sad situation. My brother, like Henry Aldrich's father, is also a member of that noble, distinguished, glorious honorary society—Phi Beta Kappa. (That stale description of the outfit, so often in the mouths of the folks at home, always reminds me of a cheap trumpet-blast introduction to some flop circus act.) Since the day I started to school, my Phi Beta brother has caused me much difficulty.

Twelve years ago, on the day I was registered in kindergarten, besides being fearfully frightened, I distinctly remember being patted gently and encouragingly on the head by my mother, and being told proudly about the beautiful paper dolls and drawings that my brother Jack produced when he was in kindergarten. But, as in so many other things, I was not an adept in those elementary arts, and my brother's superiority over me was recognized even then.

From kindergarten until the time I graduated from grammar school, my progress was compared, or rather contrasted, with my brother's. When on rare occasions I had the opportunity to display a few gold merit stars before my parents as a proof of some commendable work in arithmetic or geography, I would be promptly reminded that my brother received two or three times that number of merit stars. Always Jack did better work than I; always he received higher grades; always he was the superior student; and always I was reminded of that.

Once while standing in the principal's office, waiting nervously and fearfully to be scolded for throwing snowballs at some girls, I saw hanging on a wall the school's scholarship plaque, listing the names of outstanding students for the past twenty years. Under the year 1928 was engraved my brother's name. I was a bit surprised and, for the moment, pleased, for that

was the first time I had seen the plaque, although from home reminders I was quite aware that it existed. The principal saw me and discovered by my beaming smile and fixed stare that I recognized someone's name on it. He sent me home with a long, dramatic letter for my parents, stating that he was deeply disappointed in me—in me, the brother of a boy who had achieved high scholastic honors and leadership in his class. My parents further elaborated on my misdoings and, of course, again extolled my brother's high reputation.

On the memorable day I graduated from that grammar school, I was given a bicycle, some sentimental kisses, a host of good-luck phrases, and innumerable wishes that I do as well as my brother in the future.

Unfortunately, I enrolled in the same high school that my sagacious predecessor had attended—a mistake that I shall never forget. When I received a few unsatisfactory grades in algebra or physics, I was reminded by both teachers and parents that my brother did much better than I. Everyday, it seems, I was reminded of this, if not by my parents then by my teachers, who, I believe, had an enormous capacity for remembering trivialities. Even the disagreeable old principal, whom I visited at times by request of the teachers, showed such concern as to tell me one day that he was thoroughly *disgusted* because I did not show any traces of the diligence that graduated my brother as valedictorian of his class ten years before.

By this time, my brother had graduated *cum laude* from college.

For some inexplicable reason, my mother knew just when report card day occurred, and the moment I walked into the house with my card she would demand to see it. I never took the initiative to present it. Once, just as she finished voicing her disapproval over it, she picked up the afternoon mail and glanced at a pamphlet addressed to my brother. It was the Phi Beta Kappa's *Key Reporter*. For weeks and weeks after, I was the shame-faced victim, the hounded creature, of a Greek-letter society.

I solemnly vowed to avoid my brother's alma mater, and I did, but the hoodoo of the Phi Beta Kappa followed me to Champaign, for a couple of my brother's former school chums are now teaching here. One of these gentlemen extended me an invitation to supper with him and his wife. Had my well-meaning brother known that my position was going to be strained and uncomfortable, I am sure he would not have written to the gentleman about me. My host's wife served a delicious meal; however, the remainder of the evening was quite uninteresting—devoted to a scholarly monologue, a flow of incomprehensible polysyllables. Once during the course of the evening his continuous flow was interrupted with, "And what is your opinion on the subject?" I gave some illusive and vague reply, which must have seemed ridiculous. And he said, smiling, "You have quite a bit of study-

ing to do, young man, if you aspire to be a Phi Beta Kappa, as is your brother." Soon after that familiar innuendo, I bade him goodnight.

Henry Aldrich was expected to be a Phi Beta Kappa although he had no intentions of being one. I, too, have no intentions of being one. If my son can be spared long hours of compulsory study, if he can be spared the annoyance of relatives who expect him to achieve the utmost in grades, if he can be spared dining with tiresome professors—then my reasons for not wanting to be a Phi Beta Kappa are not worthless.

To be a Phi Beta Kappa is an honor you never forget. And if you are the brother or the son of one, you do not forget it either.

Credemus

ELIZABETH LIVESAY

Rhetoric I, Theme 12, 1941-1942

PROBABLY NO TWO PEOPLE IN THE WORLD HAVE EX-
actly the same philosophies or beliefs. Clifton Fadiman, when he edited a book called *I Believe*, brought together many divergent and many similar beliefs of twenty-two eminent people, varying from humorists to anthropologists or explorers. I should like to discuss the personal philosophies of Pearl Buck, Stuart Chase, and Henrik van Loon, to compare these philosophies briefly, and to tell why these particular philosophies appeal to me.

The essence of Pearl Buck's statement is that by using will power we can face any circumstances and be glad that we are alive. Mrs. Buck believes that it is essential consciously to choose life over death in formulating a philosophy. Death to Mrs. Buck is not merely death in the physical sense of the word but the inertia that comes through merely living in a fixed routine or pattern of habits. Her conception of life is also clear. By life she means more than simply the state of being. She means using will power to meet every circumstance of existence actively. Thus Pearl Buck would choose life even if she were racked with pain, even if she were wretchedly poor. She contends that by using will power she can be free of any pain or misfortune and continue to feel that life is worth living.

The second contributor whose philosophy appeals to me is Stuart Chase, one of America's best contemporary social and economic critics. I like Mr. Chase's statement of his philosophy even better than Pearl Buck's, because Mr. Chase deals with specific realities instead of with abstract terms. For

example, he takes the reader into the Rio Puerco River Valley of New Mexico to show that the white man has brought desolation to large parts of our nation by overgrazing the plains and overcutting the forests. By this illustration, Mr. Chase brings out one of his main beliefs: "That I am a creature of this earth." Mr. Chase believes that, unless we recognize the importance of nature, the devastating losses of money, crops, water, and game will continue, that our natural resources will be depleted. He maintains that by questioning and analyzing various experiences in his life his social philosophy was formed. To Stuart Chase "progress depends on using the scientific attitude in social as well as in physical affairs."

Henrik van Loon's is the third philosophy which I like. Mr. van Loon spends more time discussing religion than nearly any other contributor to this book. After studying every great religion in the world, Mr. van Loon comes to the conclusion that not one of the established creeds will ever give him any satisfaction. He is not alone in believing that the traditional religions offer little to the world today. Indeed, as I was greatly surprised to discover, hardly any of these twenty-two famous people accept the Christian doctrines as they are found in the Bible. The research done by modern science and a love of life instead of a hope for death are the main bases for this changed attitude toward religion. Although Mr. van Loon accepts the fact that some force outside ourselves has started the universe, he refuses to spend his time trying to solve the apparently unsolvable riddle of existence. Instead, Henrik van Loon desires "to make this world with its tremendous, with its incredible potentialities of beauty and happiness a place in which every man, woman, and child will be truly able to say, 'We are grateful that we are alive, for life indeed is good.'"

When I first read these three philosophies, they seemed entirely different. But as I read them again, I could see that they were all alike in placing the emphasis on life, on making life happier and more beautiful without reference to any life which may follow this. These three philosophies also refuse to accept any established religions. Yet Pearl Buck, Stuart Chase, and Henrik van Loon all agree that they feel a profound humility concerning the creative force behind nature. The only real difference in these philosophies is the means by which these individuals think that happiness can be obtained.

Undoubtedly these three particular philosophies appeal to me because I have similar beliefs. I believe with Pearl Buck that will power can largely determine the success or failure of life; I believe with Stuart Chase that scientific analysis can bring progress; and I believe with Henrik van Loon that only as we try to make life more beautiful and satisfying for others can we ourselves find happiness. And with all three of these famous people I believe that some unknown force has guided and will continue to guide the universe.

This Little Piggy Stayed Home

LOLA CLARK

Rhetoric II, Theme 16, 1941-1942

IT MUST HAVE BEEN MY THIRD-GRADE GEOGRAPHY BOOK which first brought me to realize the importance of the farm. Within this simply written volume were illustrations and accounts of how the early-rising farmer cultivates his crops and fattens his livestock for the purpose of supplying food to the hungry multitudes in Chicago or Philadelphia. After taking an elementary university course in economics, I am still confident that the farmer is the provider of the nation, even though the course did not always present him realistically. Economics lessons often used as an example the farmer who shrewdly markets his cream and meat, only to purchase oleomargarine and wieners for home consumption.

Being from a farm family, I know that such a diet is not common to the farm. Our vegetables are seasoned with rich cream, our meat is cut in generous slices, and our butter is served in a golden heap instead of in miniature squares arranged symmetrically on a salad plate. Sufficient wholesome food—that is the heritage of the American farm family.

Meat is the basic food of the diet. Several times each winter the farmer sacrifices a small portion of his swine herd for home use. The process—slaughtering—must be given the same careful thought and preparation as any other important farm work.

Temperature has a great deal of effect on the success of slaughtering. Freezing weather permits the quick and thorough chilling of the meat and enables it to stay fresh longer or yield to the cure better. At the first hint of cold weather, Dad collects his slaughtering equipment. It is advantageous to kill several animals at once; therefore, neighbors and relatives often pool their labor in a multiple killing. The wives come along to help serve a potluck dinner and to compare recipes for appetizing and economical ways of serving the meat. Neighborhood slaughtering is a cooperative project that does much toward creating a feeling of good will and neighborliness.

Young, medium-sized hogs are selected because they are easily handled and at the same time produce medium-sized cuts, which are best suited to the average family. The doomed animals are penned several hours prior to the killing and fed only water. Water improves the flavor of the meat, and the absence of food from the stomach makes the cleaning job easier.

No matter how keen my appetite is for fresh pork, I always dread to see the animals slain. Slaughtering is the quickest and most humane way of killing. The live hog is suspended head downward. A quick stroke of the knife severs the large vein and artery between the heart and head. Slaughtering

the heart is improper because the heart must go on pumping after the kill, to drive the blood out of the system.

A hot fire beneath a huge iron kettle of water melts the snow in large concentric circles, and warms the immediate atmosphere so that the laboring men move speedily about with flushed faces. After the steaming water has been poured from the kettle into barrels, the stiff carcasses are dipped into the scalding water in order to loosen the dirt and bristles.

The lifeless form is changed from dead pig into a mass of potential food by using scrapers to remove the dirt and bristles until the skin has a fresh, new-born look. For convenience in working, the carcass is suspended, again head downward, by the leg tendons, which are hooked on the ends of a singletree. Before any instrument penetrates the skin, it must be sterilized. A dropped knife must be rescaled.

The head comes off first. Though there is much usable material in the head, Mom usually gives it to an elderly lady, who, being a member of the old school of culinary art, enjoys making head cheese and other old-fashioned mixtures. Few of the internal organs are fit for human consumption, but the liver and heart are salvaged; from them we get one meal. If there is more liver than we can eat at a sitting it usually goes to some needy family, as we can't be bothered with it when there are pork chops on the way. The offals are all given to the chickens, except for a few casings which are saved for stuffed sausages.

Each half of the hog is divided into a ham, a shoulder, ribs, tenderloin, and bacon. The ribs and tenderloin are eaten fresh or are canned. The remaining cuts are cured with smoked salt for use later on. Sides and trimmings are ground into sausage and rendered into lard. Often I have watched Mom and Dad cut the layers of white fat into neat strips in preparing them for the lard press. I always tried to help, but somehow the huge, sharp knife either cut my finger or merely made crooked dents in the spongy fat. Sausage is ground, seasoned, and made into cakes before being "fried down." Dad gives the hams and shoulders regular applications of smoked salt and internal brine spray. The quality of the meat depends greatly on the thoroughness of the cure.

Unlike many of the picturesque old farm customs, butchering is not being replaced by modern invention. No machinery can replace the actual hand-slaughtering. More efficient tools and safer curing methods are definite improvements, however. Through careful planning the farmer can manage to have meat on hand the year round. Modern methods of preservation do away with having to eat excessively of pork to keep it from spoiling.

Being able to convert a live hog into edible food material is an admirable accomplishment as well as an economical, self-sustaining practice. The "little piggy that went to market" is not the only one that feeds the nation.

Vitamin K—Baby Saver

ROSEMARY ROLENS

Rhetoric II, Theme 11, 1941-1942

“WHAT IS THERE LEFT FOR ME TO DO?” MOANS THE average man of narrow outlook. “All the discoveries have been made!” Yet in their laboratories diligent scientists toil unflaggingly in search of new discoveries for the benefit of mankind. Often, by accident, in the process of their work, they stumble upon some secret, which, until then, God has hidden from man.

Little did Henrik Dam, the Danish research scientist at the University of Copenhagen, realize, when in 1934 he began experimenting with the diets of baby chicks in an effort to determine how fat was utilized, that he was on the path of discovery of a new vitamin. One morning he found several of the newly-hatched chicks dead. Blood had seeped from their internal organs into the skin, and they had died of hemorrhage! Dam was puzzled; when he made tests of the chicks' blood he discovered that it was almost totally lacking in prothrombin.¹ Since Dam was certain that all known vitamins had been included in the chicks' diet, he began experimenting with various kinds of foods to determine what essential had been lacking. He finally found that if hog liver and alfalfa were given to the baby chicks they did not bleed so easily. It was logical that these foods contained some yet undiscovered substance upon which blood coagulation depended. Dam, not knowing what it was, named it Vitamin K for “koagulation factor.”²

Almost simultaneously it was pointed out by Herman J. Almquist, who at the University of California was also doing research work on chick bleeding, that Vitamin K was manufactured by bacteria of putrefaction. Feeding the chicks putrid fish meal also cured the tendency toward hemorrhage.

At St. Louis University, the head of the biochemistry department, Dr. E. H. Doisy, who was destined to contribute perhaps more than any other single scientist to the knowledge of Vitamin K, summoned a group of his colleagues to begin research in 1936. Determined to extract the mysterious substance in a pure form, their first task was to find a solvent. They finally hit upon it—a simple dry cleaning fluid, petroleum ether. For two years

¹Prothrombin is one of the essential factors in the coagulation of the blood. According to the theory proposed by Morawitz, which is the most logical and generally accepted, there are four such agents. 1—Prothrombin interacts with 2—thromboplastin and 3—calcium, to form thrombin, which, in turn, reacts with 4—fibrinogen. The fibrinogen is thus transformed into an insoluble gel, called fibrin. This constitutes the blood clot, which prevents hemorrhage.

²Ratcliff, J. D., *Reader's Digest*, XXXVII (November, 1940), 55-7.

Doisy and his patient co-workers toiled long hours in the laboratory. When they finally were able to extract a few drops of the yellow oil that was pure Vitamin K, they found it ineffective because light from electric bulbs as well as the sun destroyed it. Therefore they had to work in a closed dark room, through which drifted the sickening, stifling odor of boiling fish meal. But success was the reward of their toil, and, after securing the pure vitamin, they were able to analyze its chemical structure and synthesize it. Similar success was announced at practically the same time in the summer of 1939 by Almquist and by L. F. Feisir of Harvard.

Vitamin K has now been put to use enough times and has been successful in controlling or preventing bleeding so often that its value is well established. Simple dietary deficiencies are "rarely sufficient to cause a serious lack of Vitamin K in man."³ Complications do arise, however, when there is a disturbance of the liver, for it is here that the prothrombin, essential for blood coagulation, is formed. It is even believed by some scientists that Vitamin K is a constituent of the prothrombin molecule.⁴ One authority chooses to call it "the general group of substances capable of synthesis by the liver into prothrombin."⁵

Man obtains Vitamin K either through the food he eats, since it is present in liver and green vegetables such as cabbage, spinach, kale, and tomatoes, or it is manufactured by bacteria found in the normal intestine.⁶ Normally its absorption is made possible by the bile secreted through the bile ducts of the liver. In case of disorders involving lack of bile in the intestine, such as obstructive jaundice, gall stones, tumor growths, and yellow fever, and in case of abnormal conditions including lack of putrefactive bacteria in the intestine, ulcerative colitis, sprue, liver damaged by cirrhosis or chronic hepatitis, the administration of Vitamin K, orally or parentally in a water soluble form, has been proved to be effective. It must be understood that the vitamin itself does nothing to remedy the ailments; it does, however, remove the danger of hemorrhage associated with them. Thus, after the administration of Vitamin K, the doctor can now perform a gall bladder operation with comparative safety, whereas, before, the patient was in extreme danger of bleeding to death on the operating table.

Within the past few years the development of synthetic Vitamin K compounds has been remarkable. The first products put on the market were unstable extracts from alfalfa, and the cost was high. Consequently, their

³Smith, H. P., "Recent Study of Blood Clotting," *Scientific Monthly*, LI (July, 1940), 97.

⁴Stafford, Jane, "Alphabet of Vitamins," *New Republic*, CIII (November 25, 1940), 720.

⁵McNealy, Raymond W., *Illinois Medical Journal*, LXXVIII (August, 1940), 123.

⁶"The bacillus coli communis, bacillus coreus, and bacillus subtilis are capable of synthesizing a fat-soluble anti-hemorrhage factor which is not released or excreted into the media on which they grow." *Ibid.*, 123.

use was strictly limited. Now, since Doisy compounded the synthetic Vitamin K, which has proved even more active than the substance extracted from natural sources, more and more cases are treated, with gratifying results.

You may ask if Vitamin K is an effective cure for hemophilia, the hereditary bleeding disease of Spain's royal family. Doisy wondered too, but when he investigated, he found that hemophilia is caused by the absence of a constituent of the blood other than prothrombin. Although Vitamin K cannot be used to cure this relatively rare disease, it can be used to great advantage in the solution of a very common and, therefore, more important problem, that of bleeding in the newborn.⁷ It is in saving these precious young lives that, I believe, Vitamin K proves its value most conclusively.

The danger which infants encounter of bleeding to death during the first week of life has long been apparent to man. According to the Mosaic law, male infants had to be circumcised. However, in view of the already recognized peril, it was forbidden for the operation to be performed until the child was eight days old.

It is ironic to consider that when Dam's discovery was first revealed, the world failed to note the significant relationship between the bleeding of newly-hatched chicks and the hemorrhages that were claiming the lives of one out of one hundred and fifty to one out of twenty infants within the first four days after birth.⁸ For some time the only American scientists who bothered with Vitamin K research were those interested in poultry husbandry.⁹

Yet, at this time, as through all time before, newborn children were dying of uncontrollable hemorrhages caused by the slightest of injuries, or of internal bleeding.¹⁰ Sometimes they did not die; blood seeped into their skulls and paralyzed many of them, so that they might perhaps better have died. Hopeful doctors could only look on helplessly, unable to grasp the fleeting little lives; they could not stop the fatal flow of blood.

Reliable authorities, including Dam, Nyggard, Warner, Brinkhous, Smith, Grossman, Quick, Shettles, Delfs, Hellman, Waddell, and Guerry have agreed that such hemorrhages are caused by a prothrombin deficiency. After careful observations they all indicate that soon after birth the infant's prothrombin level begins to fall and, although they do not agree exactly on the time at which the drop begins and how long it lasts, they do agree that during this period all normal infants are in danger of hemorrhage.

The explanation of this characteristic fall of the prothrombin level is

⁷Ratcliff, *op. cit.*, 57.

⁸Stafford, *op. cit.*, 719.

⁹*Ibid.*, 719.

¹⁰In chicks, sometimes the bleeding which culminated in death was started by the pulling of a pin-feather!

somewhat a matter of speculation. Bohlender believes that it is caused by an "inadequate store of Vitamin K in the fetus."¹¹ This may be accepted as true if he means that the supply is not great enough to last the baby through the period of normal prothrombin deficiency. But if he means that the supply is not sufficient to prevent hemorrhage at birth, I prefer to accept the logical explanation of William Howell.¹² According to this authority, the supply of prothrombin received from the mother's blood is adequate at birth; and the level begins to fall several hours later, owing probably to "the normal consumption of prothrombin in the body . . . and the failure in supply of new vitamins in the diet." Howell suggests the further possibility that the low prothrombin level is a consequence of insufficient secretion of bile acids at this critical period.

The prothrombin level of the child usually falls to approximately thirty per cent that of the normal adult level. At this point and below, down as far as five per cent of the adult level, the baby is in danger of abnormal bleeding; within this range death is not always the outcome. It has been observed, however, that "death from hemorrhage resulted with grim regularity,"¹² whenever the prothrombin level dropped to five per cent or less.

After the first week the baby's prothrombin level begins to climb toward the normal concentration as quickly as it fell soon after birth. This may be explained by the fact that through the feedings of mother's milk the bacterial flora which is capable of producing Vitamin K has been established in the alimentary tract.

The idea of using Vitamin K therapy occurred first in 1938 to Dr. Dupont Guerry, a twenty-six year old interne in pediatrics at the University of Virginia Medical School Hospital. He was determined to find out whether or not this new vitamin could be used as effectively in saving the lives of newborn as it had already been used by Dr. Waltman Walters, Mayo associate, in checking hemorrhages after gall bladder operations. Dr. William Waddell, junior professor of pediatrics at the university, was called upon by Dr. Guerry to aid in the experiments.

The first life of an infant was saved in February, 1939. A baby girl, who had seemed quite normal at birth, developed internal hemorrhages when she was three days old. Her clotting time was found to be eleven minutes and seepage continued for twelve hours! After the administration of Vitamin K (22 cc. of a rich concentrate), a test was made in the infant's heel. Her clotting time had decreased to the normal three minutes. The idea had worked! To verify his conclusions Dr. Guerry, with the assistance of Drs. Waddell, William E. Bray, and Orville R. Kelley, carried on further research. Two thousand clotting-time tests were made during the year. Only four cases out of four hundred bled when treated with Vitamin K. In 219

¹¹Bohlender, *et al.*, *A.M.A. Journal*, CXVI (September, 1941), 1763.

¹²Howell, Wm. H., *A.M.A. Journal*, CXVII (September 27, 1941), 1060.

cases, in which the treatment was withheld, twenty-three hemorrhages occurred.¹³

At the research laboratory of the Maternity Hospital in Cleveland other experiments were carried out by Drs. James W. Mull, A. H. Bill, and Helen Skowronsko. They proved that hemorrhage can be prevented in the baby by giving Vitamin K to the mother during pregnancy. These scientists worked with one hundred mothers. Of this number, only one baby whose mother had received synthetic Vitamin K failed to show a reduced clotting time.¹⁴

Noteworthy experiments were carried out in April, 1941, by Dr. Bohlender and a group of his associates. They, too, used the convenient number of one hundred mothers and one hundred infants. Of these, one-half of the mothers were treated intravenously with one mg. of Vitamin K preparation. Tests of the mothers' blood, taken from the antecubical vein, were made before the administration of Vitamin K, as well as before and after the delivery of their babies. The infants' blood was taken from the cord blood at birth, and on the second, third, fourth, sixth, and eighth days from the superior longitudinal sinus. All prothrombin readings were made by the Quick procedure.¹⁵ Great pains were taken for the sake of absolute accuracy. By means of these experiments, Bohlender reached many interesting and valuable conclusions.

It was observed that the hemorrhagic disease in an infant may be prevented by administering Vitamin K to the mother before the baby is born. Vitamin K is able to pass into the infant's blood stream through the placenta because the molecule is so small. Furthermore, it was noted that it makes no difference whether the vitamin is given to the mother periodically all through the development of the fetus or five minutes before the baby is delivered. The treatment had no apparent toxic effects on the baby during its first week of life.

Thus it has been determined by extensive research that Vitamin K may be safely and profitably used to prevent hemorrhage and save lives of the newborn. Its use is especially recommended as a precautionary measure in all instances in which (1) the infant is likely to be premature, (2) labor is apt to be prolonged, (3) or operative delivery of any type is anticipated.¹⁶

Even ignoring its many uses, one can readily see how precious Vitamin K is in this capacity of saving lives alone. When we consider that of the two

¹³Ratcliff, *op. cit.*, 57.

¹⁴Anon., *Scientific American*, CLXI (November, 1939), 348.

¹⁵In this procedure the thromboplastin and calcium are constant, and "the rate of coagulation is dependent on the concentration of prothrombin and serves as a simple and direct means for determining the important clotting factor in the blood." From Bohlender, *op. cit.*, 1673.

¹⁶Bohlender, *op. cit.*, 1766.

million babies born each year in the United States, approximately one and four-tenths per cent, or twenty-eight thousand, die within the first seven days of life, and that, according to specialists, twenty to thirty-five per cent of these deaths are due to prothrombin deficiency, it is evident that, by the wise administration of this new vitamin, life can be saved in eight thousand babies who might otherwise be lost! Measured in terms of priceless human lives, the significant blessings of Vitamin K are vividly revealed, and we are sincerely grateful to the untiring men of science who have made it available to the human race.

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Public Servant

When I say "public servant," do not misunderstand me. I'm not talking about the braying politician who boasts loudly of his "Public Service." Rather, I refer to that guy who quietly goes his way ministering to the needs and caprices of the people. I mean the smartly uniformed bellhops at the beck and call of "any jerk who can pay the clerk." I mean the shoe-shine boy of whom you seldom notice more than the top of the head. I mean the restaurant cook who must dip soup from the same pot to suit one customer who wants it salty and one who wants it flat, one who wants it hot and one who wants it cool. I mean the patient waiter caught between the crossfiers of the fastidious customer who sends his steak back to be "well done" and the temperamental cook who says to "tell the customer to go to hell." I mean the nocturnal bartender who must absorb some liquor into his own breath as a measure of self-protection; and his second cousin, the soda-jerker, who must recognize the old basic sundaes by a dozen different colloquial names; and the ever-pleasant filling-station attendant who must know "how many miles from Podunk to Timbuktu" and the condition of the road "over the pass."—RALPH L. PARKER

Honorable Mention

- Charles Anderson: *The Houseman in a Rut*
Bill Babb: *Back Porches or Front Porches*
Eugene Bender: *He Wanted to Learn to Box*
Gene Brucker: *Individualism in America*
David Byer: *Cattle Feeding in Illinois*
Andrew Dennis: *Est Modus in Rebus*
Ardis Ellrich: *When Mother Took a Vacation*
Wallace Frank: *With the Coast Guard*
Edward Habicht: *Is It Healthier in Arabia?*
Ralph Hallenstein: *Another Man's Way*
Hershel Herzog: *President Street, Brooklyn*
Gordon Houser: *Plan for Victory*
Harmon Hubbard: *The Logic of Modern Physics*
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L. W. Wilkes: *Treatise on Paronomasia*
H. Paul Zimmerman: *It Will Get You*

